



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

HEU community social services workers vote to accept new agreement

HEU community social services members have ratified a new collective agreement, voting 66 per cent in favour in community living and 68 per cent in general services. HEU's vote virtually mirrors the 13-union bargaining association's ballot count where workers voted 66 per cent to accept the new agreement in community living and 69 percent in general services.

The two-year contracts cover 15,000 community social services workers province-wide, provide for continuity of service for B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens and protect jobs in exchange for about \$40 million in cost containment and concessions.

HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt says that the Campbell Liberals and their contract-shredding Bill 29 set the tone for a tough round of negotiations.

"Ratifying this collective agreement was difficult for our members because the B.C. Liberal government has already reduced workers' rights and subjected the entire sector to massive funding cuts that have put some of the most vulnerable British Columbians at risk.

"HEU community social services workers voted to accept the agreement so that long-standing relationships of trust, care and friendship between vulnerable clients and their caregivers could be safeguarded," says Allnutt.

The new agreements, which expire March 31, 2006, preserve wage rates for incumbent employees and the majority of superior benefits outside of health and welfare. Savings were achieved mostly through the implementation of a wage grid for new hires and amendments to some health and welfare benefits.

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